UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FIFTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
41st meeting
held on
Thursday, 12 December 1996
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 41st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SENGWE (Zimbabwe)

later: Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 115: IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 137: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 1991 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 139: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR GENOCIDE AND OTHER SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF RWANDA AND RWANDAN CITIZENS RESPONSIBLE FOR GENOCIDE AND OTHER SUCH VIOLATIONS COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF NEIGHBOURING STATES BETWEEN 1 JANUARY AND 31 DECEMBER 1994 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 157: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN HAITI

AGENDA ITEM 129: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PROTECTION FORCE, THE UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENCE RESTORATION OPERATION IN CROATIA, THE UNITED NATIONS PREVENTIVE DEPLOYMENT FORCE AND THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE FORCES HEADQUARTERS

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of the publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-794, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/51/SR.41
28 February 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

96-82482 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 115: IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNTIED NATIONS (continued) (A/51/515)

1. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) reported with some disappointment that the modest improvement projected in the financial position of the United Nations had not been confirmed, and that it seemed unlikely that a number of contributions expected by the end of December would actually be received. At the end of November, unpaid assessments had consisted of $700 million for the regular budget and $1.7 billion for peacekeeping, making a total of $2.4 billion. Payments received in the first few days of December had reduced the outstanding total to just under $2.3 billion, which was still far too high for the financial health and viability of the Organization. The negative cash position of the General Fund had grown to $178 million, according to the most recent figures.

2. That disappointing trend had come despite serious efforts by many Member States to meet their obligations, often in the face of significant economic problems, and he conveyed the Secretary-General's sincere appreciation to those States. As at 30 November 1996, 97 Member States had paid their regular budget assessments in full, compared with 90 by the same date in 1995 and 72 in 1994. Of the total $697 million in regular budget assessments outstanding at 30 November, 69 per cent was owed by the United States.

3. With regard to projections of regular budget cash flow, rather than the $300 million in contributions anticipated for the final quarter of 1996, more recent information indicated that just over $200 million would be received. The United States had indicated that it would pay $213 million by the end of 1996; $150 million had been received, but he had been advised that the remaining $63 million would not be paid in 1996. A number of payments from other Member States, previously estimated at over $29 million, were also not expected before 1997. As a result, the combined General Fund was projected to end the year with a negative balance of $195 million, compared to an earlier estimate of $103 million, meaning that there would be no significant improvement over 1995.

4. With regard to current peacekeeping cash flow, as at 30 November 1996, unpaid assessed contributions to peacekeeping operations had totalled a little over $1.7 billion. The current estimate of $910 million in combined peacekeeping cash was based on reductions in both projected receipts and outlays. The increase of $115 million was larger than anticipated and was necessary in order to provide for the expected shortfall under the regular budget. Payments to troop providers totalling $299 million had already been made and an additional $51 million would be paid by the end of December, thus completing the promised payment of $350 million for 1996.

5. In addition, $255 million of the $400 million expected from the Russian Federation had been received, and a further payment of $50 million would be made before 31 December, bringing to $305 million the total contributions of the Russian Federation in 1996. Accordingly, a special year-end payment of $200 million would be made to troop providers. Should there be additional receipts beyond current projections, additional payments to troop and equipment

providers might be possible. On the basis of current projections, an estimated $990 million was owed to Member States for troop and equipment costs. The increase from the earlier estimate of $700 million was due to the $75 million shortfall in the special year-end payment of $275 million that had been planned, and the reassessment of the liability for contingent-owned equipment, mostly for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). The Secretary-General remained committed to reducing the amount owed to troop- and equipment-contributing countries as much and as quickly as possible.

6. According to the current forecast, the combined General Fund would show a cash deficit of $195 million and combined peacekeeping accounts should have a positive balance of $910 million. The combined cash position of the Organization would thus be $715 million, compared with an earlier estimate of $692 million.

7. He regretted to report that the Organization was still obliged to resort to the financially imprudent practice of borrowing from peacekeeping accounts to maintain its basic operations and that it would almost certainly have to do so again in 1997. That was a fundamentally unsound financial practice and, with the level of peacekeeping balances likely to decline as peacekeeping activity was reduced, it might not be possible to resort to it to the same extent in the future. At a time when all efforts should be focused on reform and renewal of the Organization, the continuing financial crisis was undermining those efforts and distracting from the implementation of the programmes and priorities of Member States. On behalf of the Secretary-General, he thanked the 97 Member States which had paid their 1996 assessments in full and appealed to the others to meet their obligations fully.

8. Mr. ZLENKO (Ukraine) said that from the experience of Ukraine, he was convinced that the inability of some Member States to meet their financial obligations was a direct result of their overassessment. It would be impossible for the United Nations to overcome the financial crisis unless the irregularities in the apportionment of its expenses were eliminated. Thus, it was important not to lose the opportunity to begin putting in place the comprehensive package of measures required to resolve the financial crisis by adopting the parameters for a new scale of assessments at the current session of the General Assembly.

9. Ensuring a viable financial base for the United Nations depended on the political will and commitment of Member States. Despite its economic difficulties, Ukraine was doing its utmost to honour its obligations. He was pleased to reaffirm that Ukraine would contribute up to $20 million to the Organization in the coming days, thereby substantially decreasing its arrears to the regular budget. It would also take steps towards paying its assessment for peacekeeping operations. His Government would be increasing its payments to the United Nations during 1997 as well.

10. Mr. VALLE (Brazil) said that domestic budget constraints had kept Brazil from being as prompt as it would like in making its contributions, but that it was fully committed to meeting its obligations to the Organization. Accordingly, he was pleased to report that he had been authorized to inform the Committee that Brazil would make a payment of $10 million to the regular budget before the end of 1996.

/

11. Mr. JAREMCZUK (Poland), referring to the charts circulated by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management to illustrate his statement, requested clarification of the figure of $2.3 billion in total unpaid assessments as at 2 December 1996 given in chart 1. There appeared to be a $100 million discrepancy that needed explanation.

12. Ms. LETROT (France), requesting clarification of chart 14, noted that the difference between the previously forecasted cash position for peacekeeping operations of $692 million and the current forecast of $715 million amounted to $23 million. She asked whether that surplus could be used to reimburse troop contributors. Otherwise, it would appear that the Organization was improving its cash situation at the expense of troop-contributing countries. With reference to chart 10, the cash position for peacekeeping operations had improved by $115 million. It was her understanding that the improvement was due to lower reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, which had amounted to only $75 million. She requested clarification as to the $40 million difference between those two figures.

13. Mr. SULAIMAN (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, in accordance with Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations, Syria had decided to pay its arrears for peacekeeping operations and had established a five-year payment plan, scheduled to begin in 1997. He was pleased to inform Member States that the Syrian Government had decided to pay its first instalment during 1996. The payment of arrears, however, did not cover the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) or the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), on which his country's position was well known.

14. Mr. SUCHARIPA (Austria) said that his delegation was greatly concerned at the financial situation confronting the Organization despite the efforts made by the Secretary-General and the Secretariat. The clearest indication of the seriousness of the situation came from charts 13 and 14, which showed that the debt to troop-contributing countries was higher than the combined cash position. That was an alarming signal which he hoped would encourage Member States to pay their dues and provide impetus for finding solutions. Austria expressed its thanks to those delegations which had made efforts to pay their assessments.

15. Mr. ATIYANTO (Indonesia) said that his delegation noted the conclusions of the Under-Secretary-General with serious concern and would communicate those concerns to its Government. He reiterated the need for Member States, especially the major contributors, to fulfil their financial obligations, and asked that special consideration be given to developing countries.

16. Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand) said that her delegation was deeply disappointed at the current cash flow situation, considering the decline in peacekeeping expenditures and the no-growth budget for the biennium. She commended the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Brazil for their laudable efforts to reduce their arrears, which would allow payments to be made to troop contributors. Her delegation was deeply concerned that the practice of borrowing from peacekeeping funds to bolster the regular budget would continue.

17. Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) said that he would like to receive several clarifications from the Under-Secretary-General. In chart 1, the figure for total unpaid assessments should be $2.2 billion, not $2.3 billion. In relation

to chart 4, the Under-Secretary-General had said that 69 per cent of the outstanding contributions to the regular budget was owed by the United States, but he would be interested to know what other major contributors were among those which owed the remaining 31 per cent. Chart 8 showed some improvement, albeit slight, in the cash position compared with 1995. He would be interested to know whether there was a reverse cash flow because countries had not paid their assessed contributions or because outlays were exceeding the regular budget. With regard to charts 10 and 11, which showed an improvement in the cash position for peacekeeping, how the savings had been achieved and whether larger payments could be made to troop contributors because of the cash surplus should be clarified.

18. Mr. HANSON (Canada) expressed his delegation's appreciation to those countries which had paid their assessments, but recalled that all Member States were under an obligation to pay their assessments in full, on time and without conditions. Accordingly, those Member States which had participated actively in the reform of the Organization should undertake to set a good example in that area.

19. Mr. SOAL (South Africa) said that his delegation shared the disappointment that there had been no significant change in the financial situation of the Organization, but felt that efforts at improvement must continue. With regard to chart 4, he inquired whether figures were available on the percentages of outstanding peacekeeping assessments owed by individual Member States.

20. Mr. KELLY (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union delegations shared the concern at the lack of any significant improvement in the financial situation. The amount of almost $1 billion owed to troop-contributing countries was substantially the same as at the end of 1995. He welcomed the announcement of payments, and trusted that the example set by Ukraine, Brazil, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Russian Federation would be emulated by other States in arrears. The continuing critical situation underlined the urgent need for action early in the new year to resolve the situation.

21. Mrs. GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba) said that her delegation, too, was concerned at the financial situation. Her Government was doing all it could to make its payments and had reduced the level of its outstanding contributions. She welcomed the announcements made regarding contributions, which showed a commitment to the Organization. A distinction should be drawn between non-payment by developing countries because of their special circumstances and political decisions to withhold payment. Her delegation saw no link between the financial crisis and the scale of assessments; any difficulties in the negotiations on the scale methodology should be seen as confined to that area. She requested further details of the negative impact of the financial situation on the internal reform and renewal of the Secretariat.

22. Mr. THORNE (United Kingdom) said that his delegation shared the regret that the earlier optimism regarding the cash-flow situation had proved unfounded. Borrowing from peacekeeping funds at the expense of troop-contributing countries was unacceptable. His delegation looked forward to the revised figures for contingent-owned equipment liability in respect of the United Nations Protection

Force (UNPROFOR). He requested details of the percentage contribution of the major debtors to the peacekeeping budget.

23. Ms. CHEN Yue (China) said that her delegation shared the general concern at the lack of improvement in the financial situation, and welcomed the announcements of payments of contributions.

24. China was one of the 97 Member States which had paid their contributions in full and on time. In response to the Secretary-General's appeals, China had paid its contribution at the beginning of the year, although, as a result of technical difficulties, it had not been able to pay some peacekeeping assessments on time. In that regard, her Government expected to make a final payment of $5 million very soon. She appealed to all Member States to pay in full, on time and without conditions.

25. Mr. BLUKIS (Latvia) said that his delegation also welcomed the good news, as well as the efforts by Member States to discharge their financial obligations to the Organization. He supported the call by Ukraine for early adoption of the parameters for a new scale of assessments. He requested details of the figures which had been used as a basis for the Under-Secretary-General's presentation, for example, the total peacekeeping assessments for 1996, an asked whether it was possible to present the Committee with forecasts for 1997, particularly with respect to total peacekeeping expenditures.

26. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the payment by Ukraine had been included in the forecast presented to the Committee, but that the figure announced by Brazil had not. Regarding chart 2, an amount of $175 million received on 2 December had been used to reduce the peacekeeping debt, with the result that the regular budget cash position as at 2 December 1996 had been minus $178 million. While there had in fact been a slight improvement in the combined cash position, there had also been a major increase in the amount owed for troops and equipment, currently estimated at $990 million. Some cash was being held back to allow the Organization to pay its bills and to forestall a crisis of confidence. In the circumstances, the level of debt, which was principally owed to Member States, could not be lowered.

27. The reassessment by the Russian Federation, which had paid $305 million rather than $400 million, had lowered the year-end peacekeeping reimbursement by $75 million, although the Organization was still paying $200 million to troop contributors. While the lower payment by the Russian Federation had increased the amount owed to Member States, most of that amount related to UNPROFOR contingent-owned equipment.

28. The apparent discrepancy in chart 1 was due to the fact that the regular budget amount was somewhat over $500 million and the peacekeeping budget amount somewhat over $1.7 billion, so that the total was indeed $2.3 billion.

29. It had been hoped to receive $300 million in contributions in December, but only $200 million had actually come in, with the United States accounting for $63 million of the shortfall. A further four countries accounted for an additional $29 million. The cash situation had improved because the Organization had slowed down its payment of bills; as a result, reimbursements

to Member States could not be increased. A cautious approach was in order, in case future peacekeeping assessments were made by applying previously unapplied credits, which would result in lower cash receipts.

30. With respect to the major peacekeeping debtors, in general terms the United States accounted for 54 per cent of the outstanding debt, with the Russian Federation accounting for 15.5 per cent.

31. The financial situation had a negative impact on reform because it diverted attention and resources from the reform process to crisis management. In some cases, it had even resulted in additional costs. For example, voluntary separation agreements concluded in 1995 had had to be deferred to 1996 because there had not been enough money to pay off departing staff members and their extra period of service had not been particularly productive.

32. Peacekeeping assessments for 1996 had amounted to $1.4 billion. Total assessment forecasts for 1997 were not yet available. Payments were expected in January 1997 from 20 early payers to the regular budget, and the $63 million not received from the United States in December 1996 might also be received in January.

33. His next report would be made in the latter half of January, and he would continue to make such presentations every four to six weeks in an effort to provide Member States with the necessary information.

34. Mrs. GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba) said that her delegation failed to see how the voluntary separation programme had had an impact on internal reform, since it seemed, rather, to be an economy measure. It would be useful for all the information on the financial situation to be issued in official documents.

35. Her delegation had earlier raised questions relating to the efficiency review, and had hoped to receive replies from the Under-Secretary-General at a formal meeting. She asked whether it would be possible for the Under-Secretary-General to respond at the current meeting, so as to advance informal consultations on the matter. If that was not possible, she asked when a formal meeting might be scheduled.

36. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the information on the financial situation would, as he had already noted, be issued in an official document. He had thought it preferable to provide the information orally, rather than wait for the issuance of the relevant document. Copies of his statement were also available to delegations. Regarding the efficiency review, when he had learnt that the matter would be raised in the Committee, he had sought to know what questions would be put, but had received no details.

37. Mrs. GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba) said that the procedure followed by the Under-Secretary-General was useful in keeping Member States up to date, and welcomed his assurance that the information would be included in an official document. Regarding the efficiency review, her delegation had further questions concerning the criteria for the selection of members of the Efficiency Board, since its membership was not representative: for example, the Executive Director and the Chairman were from the same country. She would also welcome

information on the future work of the Efficiency Board, in particular, how long it would function and under what guidelines; and details of the professional background of Board members, given that interns were involved in its work, and of the exact dates on which their respective contracts had been signed with the Organization. Clarification of the 13-per-cent payment by Governments in support costs, as well as information on which Governments were making such payments, would also be welcome. She asked for a breakdown of the amounts involved.

38. The Efficiency Board had made visits as part of its work; she wished to know which countries it had visited and how it had incorporated what it had learned into its recommendations. She asked whether the Board was focusing on cuts or on programme implementation, and whether the Secretariat saw a link between Efficiency Board proposals and General Assembly approval. She also wondered how the next programme budget would reflect the Board's proposals and what the Secretariat's forecast was in that connection. Answers to all those questions were important for transparency and decision-making.

39. Mr. CONNOR (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the term "Secretariat" could not really be applied to the Efficiency Board, since it was composed of seven active or retired Under-Secretaries-General and ambassadors, supported by working groups comprising approximately 30 people. The nationalities of the various Board members was a matter of record. To his knowledge, only two of them were from the same country and that country was not the United States. Their professional background was also a matter of record; the Board members had wide and pertinent experience in the fields of management, development and political and peacekeeping affairs.

40. The Board had been given very general guidelines, in that the Secretary-General had simply asked it to improve the Organization's efficiency. Efficiency had been interpreted to mean enhanced output with respect to quality, timeliness and cost and a sense of ownership of that output by the staff.

41. He was unable to recall the exact dates on which the various people connected with the Efficiency Board had embarked on their functions. Member States had provided a steady stream of experts in the general management and other fields, including individuals from Australia, Colombia, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

42. With one exception, all those who had travelled abroad on fact-finding or "benchmarking" visits to study the efficiency measures being undertaken by other Governments and international organizations were United Nations staff members. They had visited the World Bank, the United Kingdom and Canada. No further visits were planned, since the Secretariat was still analysing the information amassed during previous visits.

43. The trust fund had determined that 13 per cent of support costs for personnel on loan to the Board would be paid by Member States. The sum of $27,000 that had been earmarked to date related to the equivalent values which it had been possible to establish with respect to the loaned services. The trust fund could cover the entire 13-per-cent figure. To date, approximately $450,000 had been received from or promised by Member States.

44. It was expected that the Efficiency Board's field work would be concluded by the end of 1996. A report to the Secretary-General was in the early stages of drafting. A second report was scheduled at the end of February 1997. The Secretary-General would participate in the discussion of each of the areas to be reviewed, and would reiterate his commitment to implementing any necessary legislative action. His standing instructions to programme managers were to conclude the 400 efficiency projects already undertaken, to embed the process in the Organization's operations, and to consider the value of those efficiency projects in preparing future budget submissions.

45. Mr. Alom (Bangladesh), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

46. Mrs. GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba) said that her delegation took note of the answers provided by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, which should be made available in writing. While it was true that the Secretariat had earlier provided written answers to questions asked by her delegation, only four out of the 16 pages of the reply had dealt with the issue of efficiency. Moreover, the answers had been sketchy and had not fully addressed her delegation's concerns. The whole issue of efficiency needed to be kept under review, and her delegation intended to circulate its follow-up questions in writing for the benefit of other delegations.

AGENDA ITEM 137: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 1991 (continued) (A/51/7/Add.5; A/C.5/51/30)

AGENDA ITEM 139: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR GENOCIDE AND OTHER SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF RWANDA AND RWANDAN CITIZENS RESPONSIBLE FOR GENOCIDE AND OTHER SUCH VIOLATIONS COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF NEIGHBOURING STATES BETWEEN 1 JANUARY AND 31 DECEMBER 1994 (continued) (A/51/7/Add.5; A/C.5/51/29)

47. Mr. HANSON (Canada), speaking as coordinator of informal consultations on the Rwanda Tribunal, said that draft resolutions had been drawn up which envisaged appropriating in full the amounts proposed in the relevant reports of the Secretary-General.

48. Mr. GOKHALE (India) said that his delegation wanted the Secretariat to provide an assurance in a formal meeting that, until a decision was taken on the larger issue of loaned or gratis personnel, there would be no change in the two Tribunals' current practice of charging 13 per cent of support costs in respect of such personnel.

49. Mr. GRANT (United States of America) said that his delegation would raise specific concerns in informal meetings about the projected activities of the two Tribunals during the period from 1 January 1997 until such time as the General Assembly could act on the revised estimates which the Secretary-General would be submitting in the light of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).

50. It was well known that his Government made the largest contributions to the Tribunals in terms of gratis personnel, reflecting his Government's political interest in their activities. No action should therefore be taken with regard to gratis personnel on loan to the Tribunals until his Government had had an opportunity to review the matter.

51. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the Secretary-General had been applying a uniform policy with regard to gratis personnel. Unless the General Assembly indicated otherwise, the Secretariat always applied the principle that acceptance of a voluntary contribution in cash or in kind did not entail financial liability. Payments in support of gratis personnel could be made to the Organization either directly or through trust funds.

52. He reiterated that the time-frame for the revised estimates indicated in the Advisory Committee's recommendations was somewhat unrealistic, in view of the lateness of the OIOS report. At the same time, staff were fully occupied in formulating the regular budget. Regarding the financing of the Tribunals in 1997, the Secretary-General had essentially sought authorization to maintain 1996 expenditure levels, plus the minimum necessary expenses which could not wait for the revised estimates, such as those arising from construction or the need for more space. The Advisory Committee had agreed with that position, although it had recommended that additional expenses should be limited to the rental of extra space. The Secretariat was currently examining the impact of those recommendations on the operation of the Tribunals.

AGENDA ITEM 157: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN HAITI (A/51/191/Add.1 and A/51/444)

53. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) recalled that the Advisory Committee had recommended that the General Assembly should appropriate the amount of $57 million gross for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997 to the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH), on the basis of the cost estimate submitted by the Secretary-General. However, in the light of uncertainties about the future of UNSMIH, the General Assembly had taken only partial action on the financing of the Mission at the beginning of November 1996. An assessed amount of $28.7 million gross had accordingly been appropriated until the end of 1996, in anticipation of a Security Council decision on the Mission's future. Since then, the Security Council had extended the UNSMIH mandate to 31 May 1997, with a reduction in force strength of 100 which had resulted in a cost saving of over $1 million.

54. The General Assembly should therefore take action to allow the Secretary-General to continue financing beyond 31 December 1996. The amount which would be required on the basis of the earlier recommendation by the Advisory Committee, namely $57 million, minus the $28.7 million already appropriated by the General Assembly and the $1 million cost saving, was therefore $27.4 million gross. The General Assembly should therefore adopt a decision authorizing the Secretary-General to enter into a commitment of $27.4 million gross for the operation of UNSMIH for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997, with the same amount assessed, on the basis of a monthly rate of $4.56 million gross and subject to the Security Council's decision that the Mission's current mandate would run until 31 May 1997.

55. Ms. PEÑA (Mexico), speaking as coordinator of informal consultations on agenda item 157, said that a draft decision on the item had been prepared and was available to delegations. She hoped that the Committee would be able to adopt it without holding any more informal consultations on the item.

56. Mr. GRANT (United States of America) said that his delegation wished to propose an addition to the draft decision on item 157, in line with its proposed addition to the draft resolution on the financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM). The new text would read: "Requests the Secretary-General to take all necessary actions to address the recommendations and findings of the Office of Internal Oversight Offices, the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions with respect to UNMIH and UNSMIH". His delegation had raised many questions about the problems cited in the reports of those bodies and the action being taken by the Secretary-General, and the Committee's decisions should reflect those concerns. Most of the findings and recommendations regarding operations in Haiti had pertained to UNMIH; however, since some of them concerned systematic activities, such as procurement planning, which also pertained to UNSMIH, the text proposed by his delegation referred to both Missions. The proposed text did not discount the possibility that the Secretary-General might disagree with some of the findings and recommendations of the oversight bodies; it merely requested him to address the issues they had raised.

AGENDA ITEM 129: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PROTECTION FORCE, THE UNITED NATIONS CONFIDENCE RESTORATION OPERATION IN CROATIA, THE UNITED NATIONS PREVENTIVE DEPLOYMENT FORCE AND THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE FORCES HEADQUARTERS (A/51/701)

57. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) recalled that, earlier in its current session, the General Assembly had authorized the Secretary-General to continue the liquidation of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), and to continue to provide central support to the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Wester Sirmium (UNTAES), the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) and the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) until 31 December 1996, pending the issuance of the performance report for the period from 1 January to 30 June 1996, and had expressed the hope that that report would be ready by 8 December 1996. The performance report (A/C.5/51/38) had been submitted before that date, and the Advisory Committee had been given an advance copy. However, because of its heavy workload, the Advisory Committee would not be able to complete its review of the performance report at the current session. The issue currently before the General Assembly, then, was whether the Secretary-General should continue the liquidation of UNCRO and UNPROFOR and the provision of central support to the three active operations in the former Yugoslavia. If so, the Assembly would have to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of $12.8 million gross, which represented the difference between the amount originally recommended by the Advisory Committee (A/50/903/Add.1, para. 50) and the amount authorized by the General Assembly up to the end of 1996. The question of assessments should be discussed in the light of the forthcoming report of the Advisory Committee.

58. Mr. GRANT (United States of America) said that his delegation would propose an addition to the draft resolution on agenda item 129 along the lines of its proposal in respect of the draft decision on item 157.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.